MARVEL

21 LGY# 186

VENOM ISLAND

PART I

CATES - BAGLEY - OWENS - MARTIN - ARCINIEGA

DISGRACED REPORTER EDDIE BROCK STUMBLED UPON AN AGGRESSIVE ALIEN ORGANISM CALLED A SYMBIOTE DURING ONE OF THE LOWEST POINTS OF HIS LIFE. THE TWO WERE JOINED AND USED THEIR COMBINED LUST FOR VIOLENCE TO MAKE THEIR CITY SAFER AS THE LETHAL PROTECTOR...

VENOM

RECENTLY, THE BLOODTHIRSTY SERIAL KILLER NAMED CARNAGE RETURNED, HOPING TO SLAUGHTER ANYONE WITH SYMBIOTE DNA IN THE BODIES TO FREE THE SYMBIOTE GOD **KNULL** FROM HIS PRISON AT THE HEART OF THE PLANET KLYNTAR.

BUT WHEN EDDIE BROCK'S SON, DYLAN, GOT CAUGHT IN CARNAGE'S PATH, VENOM THREW CAUTION TO THE WIND AND ABSORBED CARNAGE'S SYMBIOTE.

HE SAVED DYLAN, BUT SET KNULL FREE IN THE PROCESS. NOW, KNULL IS EN ROUTE TO EARTH—AND NOBODY BUT EDDIE BROCK KNOWS...

DONNY CATES WRITER MARK BAGLEY PENCILER ANDY OWENS INKER

FRANK MARTIN & ERICK ARCINIEGA COLOR ARTISTS VC's CLAYTON COWLES LETTERER

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FEW WEEKS BACK, THE DEVIL GAVE ME A CHOICE.

SAVE MY SON...OR KILL THE WORLD.

I LIKE TO THINK ANY FATHER WOULD DO WHAT I DID.

MAYBE NOT.

MAYBE THAT'S NOT WHAT A HERO WOULD DO.

"NEEDS OF THE MANY" AND ALL THAT...

I WOULDN'T KNOW. WASN'T EVER GOOD AT THE HERO THING...

EITHER WAY, MY SON IS STILL STANDING. AND KNULL IS STILL COMING.

NOTHING TO BE DONE ABOUT EITHER...

SO NOW WE WAIT...

...AND WE *LIVE.*

FOR AS LONG AS WE CAN.

EDDIE?!

CAR'S HERE.

YOU'RE GOING TO BE LATE.

OKAY, YEAH. LET ME GET DRESSED, AND I'LL BE OUT.

YOU LOOK WEIRD WITHOUT A BEARD. I DON'T LIKE IT.

YEAH, WELL. BEEN A WHILE SINCE I HAD TO BE PRESENTABLE, I GUESS. THIS IS IMPORTANT.

YOU...UH...YOU GONNA STICK WITH "EDDIE," THEN?

YOU GIVE ANY MORE THOUGHT TO CALLING ME... YOU KNOW...

YOU'RE GOING TO BE LATE.

DYLAN...

THIS IS IMPORTANT, RIGHT?

DAMMIT...

IT'S OKAY, EDDIE. HE NEEDS TIME.

I KNOW. I JUST WISH HE'D--

YOU REALLY ARE GOING TO BE LATE, THOUGH.

SINCE THE CARNAGE INCIDENT, PETER WAS KIND ENOUGH TO TALK LIZ ALLAN INTO LETTING DYLAN AND ME STAY WITH HER AND NORMIE FOR A FEW DAYS WHILE I WORKED ON FINDING US A PLACE.

THANKS FOR THE SHOWER, LIZ.

YOU'RE SURE IT'S NOT TOO MUCH TROUBLE?

OH PLEASE, THE BOYS ENTERTAIN EACH OTHER. IT'S REALLY NO BIG DEAL.

I OWE YOU. SERIOUSLY.

HER FAMILY'S KINDNESS IS JUST ONE IN A LONG LINE OF THINGS I'M NOT USED TO.

ALL RIGHT, BUD. TAKE CARE OF YOUR COUSIN NORMIE. I'LL BE BACK TONIGHT, OKAY?

YEAH...

WISH ME LUCK?

DYLAN'S BEEN...DISTANT SINCE HE FOUND OUT I'M HIS DAD. I TELL MYSELF THAT IT'S GOING TO BE OKAY.

GOOD LUCK, EDDIE.

THAT HE'LL EVENTUALLY COME AROUND.

...

OKAY. OKAY, I'M OFF.

BUT THEN...I REMEMBER THAT IT DOESN'T REALLY MATTER...

...BECAUSE THE WORLD IS GOING TO END ANY DAY NOW.

ALL RIGHT, SO...YOU GONNA TELL ME WHERE THIS SUPERSECRET HIDEOUT THING IS OR--

BIO-SCAN COMPLETE. EDWARD CHARLES ALLAN BROCK CONFIRMED.

PLEASE PUT ON YOUR SEAT BELT.

URRRRR

WAIT, NO! WHAT THE--

BOOM

THE ARCTIC CIRCLE. AN HOUR LATER...

SORRY FOR THE TURBULENCE, SIR.

WE HAVE ARRIVED AT OUR DESTINATION. WELCOME...

...TO AVENGERS MOUNTAIN!

THANKS FOR MAKING THE TRIP, BROCK.

WHY DON'T YOU FOLLOW ME?

CAP, I APPRECIATE THE INVITE...BUT I HAVE TO SAY I DON'T KNOW WHAT--

WE'RE JUST HAVING A CONVERSATION, EDDIE. WE APPRECIATE WHAT YOU'VE DONE OVER THE PAST WEEKS, AND WE JUST NEED TO GATHER A FEW MORE PIECES OF THE PUZZLE IS ALL.

OH... OKAY, *UM*... WHAT FOR? CAN I ASK?

OF COURSE YOU CAN. BUT I'LL TELL YOU WHAT...

...DON'T ASK ME.

ASK THEM.

EDDIE, CALM DOWN.

WAIT...NO, NO, I...I--YOU... YOU WANT ME TO BE AN AVENGER? I DON'T--

MAYBE. MAYBE NOT.

LIKE I SAID, WE'RE JUST HAVING A CONVERSATION.

A LOT OF THIS IS UP TO YOU AND WHAT YOU WANT. AND, WELL, OBVIOUSLY YOU HAVE MY VOTE, BUT THE TEAM AND I WILL HAVE TO TALK ABOUT IT.

FOR NOW, WHY DON'T YOU JUST MEET EVERYONE?

YEAH, YEAH... OKAY.

EDDIE, BREATHE. YOU AREN'T BREATHING.

EDDIE, WE KNOW THIS ONE. HE DEFEATED *KNULL* IN THE *ANCIENT TIMES.* WE NEED HIM AS AN ALLY FOR WHAT IS TO--

NO. WE DON'T DESERVE THIS.

EDWARD BROCK. YOU AND YOUR ALIEN COMPANION HAVE BEEN THROUGH HEL AND STOOD VALIANT AGAINST THE FORCES OF MALEKITH AND CARNAGE ALIKE.

EDDIE, THAT'S NOT--

FINE! @#$% HIM! LET'S SLIT HIM OPEN AND SEE WHAT GOD GUTS TASTE LIKE!

WAIT... WHAT?

I, FOR ONE, WOULD BE HONORED TO HAVE A WARRIOR SUCH AS...THE TWO OF YOU BY MY SIDE.

WHY...WHY WOULD YOU SAY THAT?

YOU DON'T TELL US NO, BROCK! YOU DON'T SHUT US UP!

NO... NO, THAT'S NOT POSSIBLE...

YOU THINK YOU CAN KILL ME?!

I ASSURE YOU IT IS, BROCK. WE HAVE ALL...

EDWARD, ARE YOU UNWELL?

YOU KILLED CLETUS!

I'M... I'M FINE. YEAH.

BUT CARNAGE...

I'M JUST... CAN I THINK ABOUT IT?

CARNAGE NEVER DIES!!!

I WAS THINKING MAYBE SOME TIME OFF WOULD BE GOOD FOR DYLAN AND ME...IF...IF THAT'S OKAY.

EDDIE, HELP ME! I CAN'T HEAR YOU. WHERE DID YOU--

HAHAHAHA!!!

I WONDER HOW FAST THIS FLAG-WAVING WAR PIG WOULD CRUMBLE IF WE SHOWED HIM WHAT THE WORLD REALLY LOOKED LIKE?

STOP IT, STOP IT!

YOU EVER NEED ANYTHING, JUST CALL.

NO QUESTIONS ASKED.

THAT'S RIGHT RUN!

EDDIE?!

QUIET!

YEAH. OF COURSE, THAT'S OKAY. I GET IT. YOU GUYS HAVE BEEN THROUGH A LOT.

WE'LL HAVE THE CAR TAKE YOU BACK, BUT...

OKAY. OKAY, YEAH.

THANK YOU, STEVE. CAP.

THANK YOU, EVERYONE.

WOW... THAT GUY IS--

YEAH.

SO HOT.

WAIT, WHAT?

I MISS THE BEARD.

HEY, I MEAN IT, BOYS. NO MORE VIDEO GAMES. IT'S TIME TO GET READY FOR BED.

OKAY.

OKAY.

EDDIE!

HEY, HOW DID IT--

IT'S FINE. JUST GONNA GO TO BED.

EDDIE... WHAT'S GOING ON? ARE YOU OKAY?

SLAM!

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WHAT'S THE MATTER, BROCK? THIS IS WHAT YOU WANTED!

SHUT UP. THIS ISN'T REAL.

EDDIE, THE QUIET PILLS. NO...PLEASE DON'T--

YOU ABSORBED US BACK INTO YOUR MIND, BROCK! WHAT THE @#$% DID YOU THINK WAS GOING TO HAPPEN?!

NO! NO, I WON'T LET YOU DO THIS.

TAKE ALL OF THEM! HAHAHA! IT'S THE ONLY WAY!

EDDIE, NO! PLEASE! WE CAN FIGHT THIS TOGETHER...

THERE IS NO FIGHTING THIS!

YOU CAN SHUT US OUT, EDDIE TAKE ALL THE PILLS YOU WANT

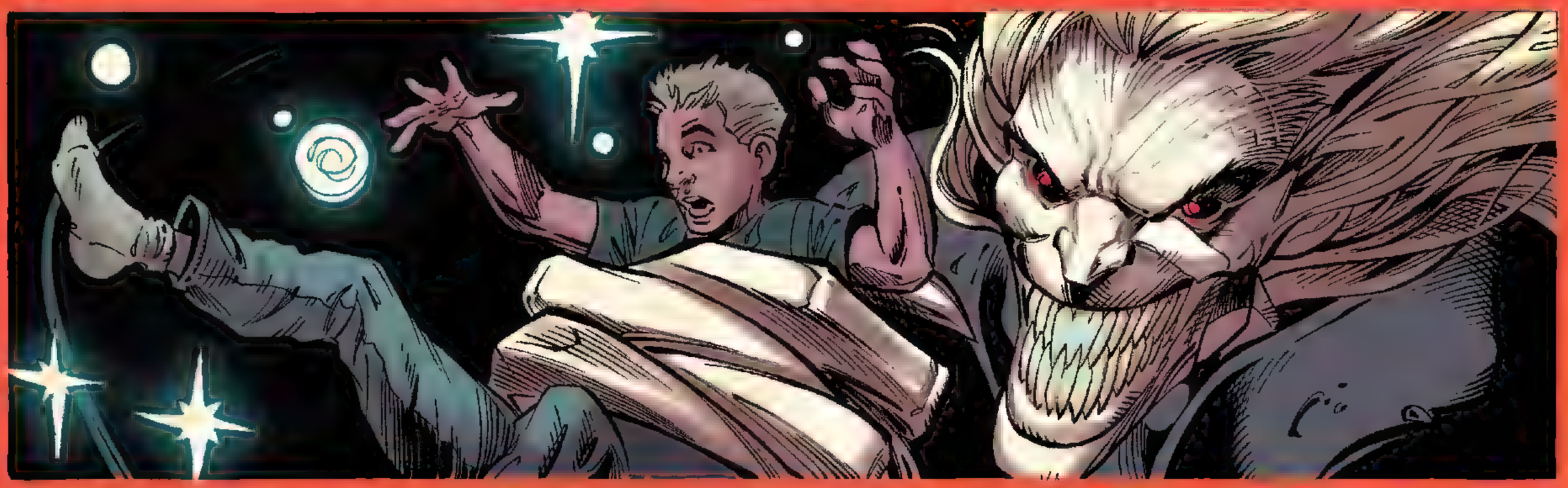
BUT YOU CANNOT RUN FOREVER.

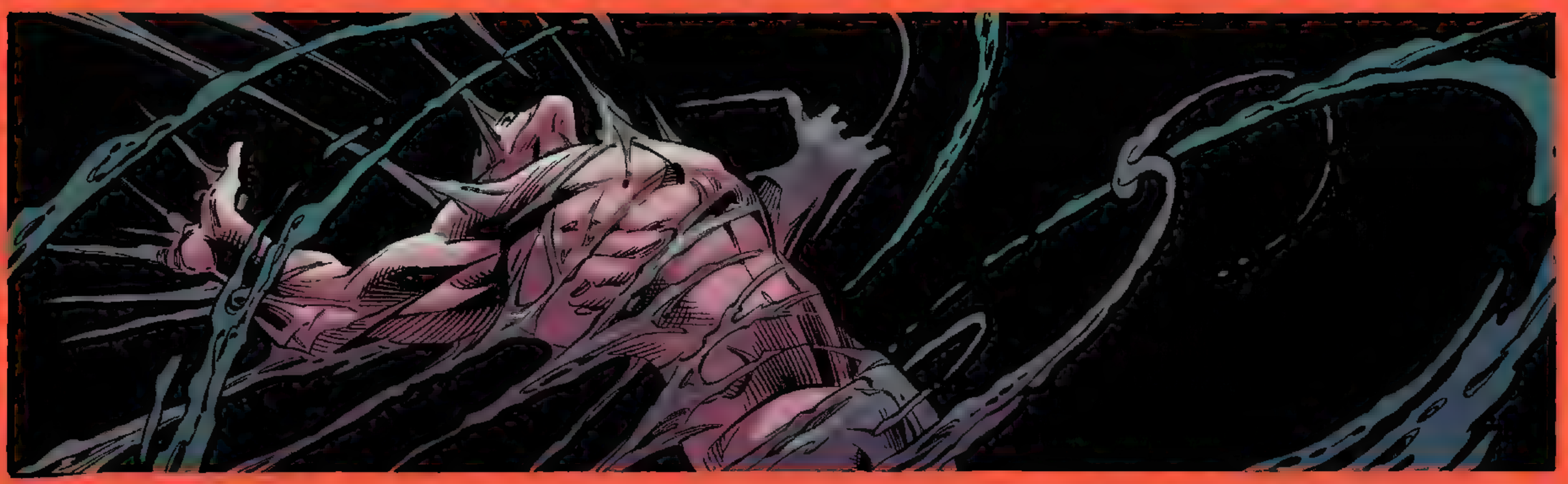
SHUT UP.

I'M WRAPPED AROUND YOUR HEART NOW BIG BOY

SHUT...UP. PLEASE...

AND THERE'S NOT A @#$%&% THING YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT





DAD!

NO!

WH... WHAT?

NO, NO, NO...

WHAT DID YOU DO?

THE END

NO. NOT THIS TIME. NOT AGAIN.

I WILL NOT LET THIS EVIL LIVE INSIDE OF ME.

DYLAN

I WILL NOT LOSE EVERYTHING I HAVE FOUGHT SO DAMN HARD TO KEEP SAFE.

I LOVE YOU, BUDDY. I'LL BE RIGHT BACK.

DYLAN

I HAVE TO BURN THIS OUT OF ME. BUT I CAN'T RISK UNLEASHING IT ON INNOCENTS.

I KNOW A PLACE.

NOW I JUST NEED A RIDE.

CAP, IT'S EDDIE.

NO QUESTIONS, RIGHT?

ISLA DE HUESOS.

THE ISLAND OF BONES.

IT'S BEEN DESERTED SINCE A MINING DISASTER IN THE '40s LED THE POPULACE TO THINK THE PLACE CURSED.

AND HELL, MAYBE IT IS.

ONCE, LONG AGO, I KIDNAPPED SPIDER-MAN AND TOOK HIM THERE TO KILL HIM.

HE FAKED HIS OWN DEATH...AND WE THOUGHT... WE THOUGHT IT WAS OVER.

WE STAYED THERE. ON THE ISLAND.

WE HAD PEACE. WE WERE... FREE.

AND THEN...*CARNAGE.* I LEFT MY PARADISE TO GO STOP HIM WHEN HE WENT ON HIS FIRST RAMPAGE ACROSS NEW YORK.

AND NOW WE RETURN.

TO BURN EVERY ATOM OF HIM OFF THE FACE OF THE EARTH.

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EDDIE... EDDIE, CAN YOU HEAR ME?

YES! ARE YOU OKAY? WHERE IS THE OTHER--

NO TIME! EDDIE YOU HAVE TO LISTEN. IT'S AWAKE! IT'S AWAKE, AND I DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH LONGER I CAN KEEP IT FROM--

EDDIE, WATCH OUT! IT'S GOING TO--

NO!

RISE AND SHINE!

YOU WANNA KILL ME?! BURN ME?!

GOOD!

WHAT IS IT DOING? WHERE DID IT--

LET'S ALL BURN!

BOOM

AGH! DAMMIT!

EDDIE, LET ME TAKE OVER. I CAN PROTECT YOU!

AH, AH, AH! NOT SO FAST, POPS!

NO! WE CAN'T CONTROL IT! CAN'T RISK--

OH GOD...

HAHAHAA!!! STRAP IN!

WE'RE GOING TO--

KRA-KOOOM

EDDIE, NO!

REEEEE!

HAHAHA!

RAAGGHHH!!!

-:COUGH:-

WAS IT WORTH IT?

IS THIS HOW YOU WANTED TO DIE?!

CRAWLING ON YOUR BELLY? BEGGING FOR YOUR LIFE?

YOU...YOU TOOK MY OTHER FROM ME.

I'M GOING TO -:COUGH:- GET IT BACK.

AND I'M GOING TO KILL YOU.

IS THAT RIGHT, PAPA?

AND WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO, HUH?

AM I SUPPOSED TO BE AFRAID? IS THAT WHAT YOU WANT?

YOU WANT ME TO COWER?!

NO...

I WANT YOU TO RUN.

TO BE CONTINUED!

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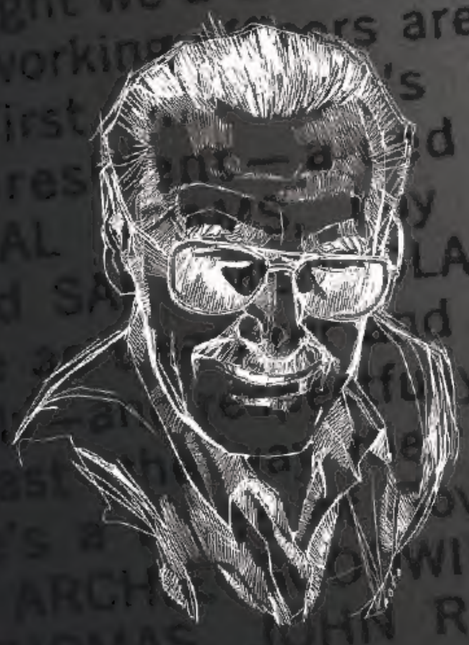
STAN'S SOAPBOX · APRIL 1972

STAN LEE'S SOAPBOX

These brief, random thoughts are being written just a short time after the Attica State Prison tragedy. Now I've no intention of imposing my own opinions upon you about which side, which party or parties might have been right or wrong. Instead, I'd like to discuss the theory of "right or wrong" itself. Is it possible that too much harm, too much injustice has been caused in the name of "right" — in the pursuit of combating "wrong?" In every human conflict, isn't each disputant completely convinced that his particular cause is wholly "right" while the opposing viewpoint is totally "wrong"? And, armed with the sense of being "in the right," don't we dogmatically attempt to impose our own will upon those who hold different convictions? But, what if we had no such hang-ups about right and wrong? What if we remember that what's right for here may be wrong for there? In fact, what's right for you may be wrong for me — and what's right for today may be wrong for some other time. "Right" to a liberal is politically "wrong" to a conservative, just as "right" to a labor leader can be "wrong" to an industrialist, or "right" to a child can seem "wrong" to a parent. Yet, I wonder what life would be like if we weren't so preoccupied with proving ourselves right and the other guy wrong. I wonder if we might not find the peace, the understanding we all seek by striving to relate to each other, to sympathize with each other's problems, to reach out to those who may differ from ourselves and to realize that they too may be "right" in their own way, from their own point of reference. I wonder — mightn't it be worth a try?

Excelsior!

Stan



STAN LEE
FOREVER

we don't like to give Hints about upcoming est. This time, though, e an exception — 'cause or so will see the daz- a wondrous new mag gonna set all of fandom called HERO FOR HIRE, ant to go into detail about ather let you surmise and a while — but from where ure it might just become ghtiest Marvel winners of — for now!

night be just the spot to Marvel's moonstruck ro- MY LOVE and OUR LOVE featuring all-new art and ! All right, so that doesn't e most of you superhero for joy — but they feature boggling artwork by talented COLAN, ROMITA, BUSCEMA, Not to mention the fact that t grab ya to see what Smilin' ry GERRY, and Groovy GARY uple of lasses like gal Friday SNICOFF and Roy's ever-lovin' IE THOMAS) can do with the l-flowers bit. Give 'em a try. na? What can it hurt?

now, it just occurred to us that 't mentioned ACBA for a few and that it's high time to he situation! In case anybody's l, ACBA stands for the Academy Book Arts, the recently-formed onal organization of comic-book writers, and associates. Well, the well into its second year already, just thought we'd clue you in as its hard-working officers are this round. First, 's DICK ANO, pres and veep. d by NEAL LA were GOLD and SA d secre- to serve y. And, respectively tell it, but not least, governors ard). There's WIN, GIL ocked of ARCH ROMITA, ROY THOMAS, VICTOR GORE- Archie Comics st starting membership 1972, and ing interested in becoming a Sup- ACADEMY OF COMIC BOOK

even all-father Odin himself we gave you a plug — n those free steaks done fo please! . . . Peace, people.

THE MIGHTY MARVEL
Now On Sale!

FANTASTIC FOUR #121: blown his horn! The earth destruction! The F.F. battles before! And then — but that y see for yourself!

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ASTONISHING TALE full, never-before-re Zar and Zabu! Plus battle ever, with — M

SGT. FURY #97: shocked wind-up o epic of all! But — w enough to see it?

VENOM

#22

HEY, VENOMANIACS! WE'VE SURVIVED THE MAYHEM OF "ABSOLUTE CARNAGE" AND ARE RUNNING THROUGH THE JUNGLES OF "VENOM ISLAND"! THERE'S STILL SO MUCH MORE TO COME IN THE WORLD OF VENOM! LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK OF THE STORY SO FAR BY WRITING TO US AT SPIDEYOFFICE@MARVEL.COM! BE SURE TO MARK YOUR LETTERS "OKAY TO PRINT"!